

NORTHERN LIGHT



THE MAGAZINE OF T O C H IN ICELAND

PRICE: 1 KRÓNA

NO. 2

SEPTEMBER 1941

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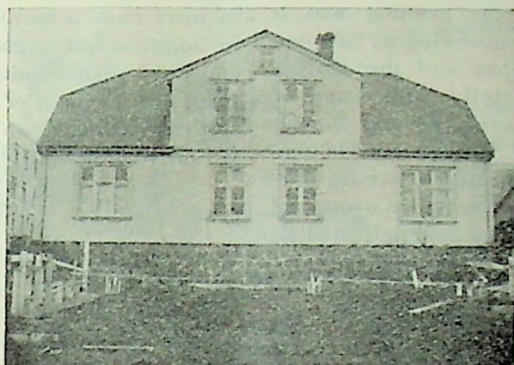
NORTHERN LIGHT

NUMBER TWO

SEPTEMBER 1941

PRICE 1 KRÓNA

THE TOC H
SERVICES
CLUB.



TÚNGATA 6
REYKJAVÍK.

THE FIRST NUMBER OF "NORTHERN LIGHT" received a far warmer reception than we had dared to hope, and the entire issue was sold out in a surprisingly short time. Encouraged by this success, we have decided to cut a bit of a dash with the present number, considerably increasing its size and scope (and, inevitably we fear, its price) and adorning it with a number of drawings and illustrations. We hope that our friends and readers will agree that our second number, which we now present, is not only bigger but better, and worth the extra fifty aurar. The striking cover design, by Signalman J. R. Wilson, will be retained for future issues and will, we hope, soon become a familiar sight in many canteens and billets throughout the island.

* *

This magazine has, of course, been censored by the Censor, and may be post-homed provided that it is not marked in any way either by pen, pencil or in pin-point.

* *

Since our last issue the Americans have moved in Iceland, and we have been

privileged to welcome a good number of them to the House. We hope that many new links in Anglo-American friendship and understanding will be forged over a cup of tea ("without cream"! in the canteen or within the circle of easy-chairs in the library. Already some of our new friends are becoming "regulars", and we are very glad to be able to print a short story by one of them in this number.

The Toc H Movement owes much to its friends in America whose generosity has made possible the opening of Toc H Services Clubs in Plymouth and Cairo (at a cost of £2500 each) and from whom a large, regular, monthly contribution to the Toc H War Services Fund is received. On the cabled instructions of Toc H Headquarters in London, the House at once placed itself formally at the disposal of the American Force, and will seek to serve them as it will continue to try and serve the British.

* *

Toc H in Iceland is beginning to justify its alternative title of "Everyman's Club" for, in addition to its recent American visitors, the House has welcomed men from Canada, Australia, New Zealand,

is a rendezvous every Sunday afternoon at 2.30 p.m., when the members sally forth from Tungata 6 to sketch in the open, or settle down to work indoors according as that fickle jade the weather is pleased to decide. The Chairman of the club is the Rev. R. P. R. Anderson of the British Sailors' Society, and the Secretary is Corporal C. J. Millin, R.A.F.

C. J. M.

PLAY-READING AND LITERARY SOCIETY.

Under this somewhat pretentious title a slowly growing circle of men interested in plays, books and poetry has been meeting every Sunday evening since January. Lately their success has been made even more certain by the welcome presence of a number of Nursing Sisters who have helped us by taking the female parts in plays and in many other ways. The following plays have so far been read:

Thunder Rock	by Robert Ardrey
Back to Methuselah	by G. B. Shaw
The Ringer	by Edgar Wallace
The Ascent of F. G.	by Auden and Isherwood
Pygmalion	by G. B. Shaw
Tons of Money	by Will Evans and Valentine
The Importance of	
Being Earnest	by Oscar Wilde
Laburnum Grove	by J. B. Priestley,

as well as a number of one-act plays including "Two Gentlemen of Soho" by A. P. Herbert, "The Monkey's Paw" by W. W. Jacobs, "A Night at an Inn" by Lord Dunsany, "The Pardoner's Tale" adapted from Chaucer by James Bridie, and several original plays by members of the society. Our thanks are due to the British Drama League for providing us with most of the sets of plays needed. A resolve to tackle "Macbeth" was thwarted by our inability to raise sufficient copies, but we hope to have a go at a Shakespeare play before long.

On the literary side, we have had read-

ings of English prose by Captain E. C. Gould and of English poetry by Major E. G. Cousins, while Mr. Churcher has contributed two evenings on "Humour in Prose and Verse". There have been Book Review evenings which have led to interesting, if often irrelevant, discussions on almost everything under the sun. Two evenings under the title of "Spare My Blushes", at which original work was anonymously contributed, read aloud and criticised, have proved highly successful. On each occasion the bag has included more than a dozen poems as well as a number of short stories and essays, and on the first occasions, four complete plays.

Suggestions as to future programme will be very welcome, and although the room is usually full we can always find space for some more kindred spirits.

R. P. S.

MUSICAL SOCIETY.

Anyone visiting a Toe H Musicial Evening for the first time, seeing the room packed to overflowing and taking note of the expertly selected programmes, would hardly imagine that this feature of Toe H activity was inaugurated merely "as a change" from the usual literary Sunday evenings. This, however, is a fact, for on a certain Sunday in March an experimental musical evening was held, at which Lt-Colonel J. Fleming officiated. His fine records of classical music scored such an astounding success that, as a matter of course, a repetition of this type of evening was immediately decided upon. Material for the second musical evening a month later, comprising selections from Beethoven, was provided by Major P. T. L. Browne. The success of the previous evening was repeated and, in response to a unanimous request, plans were set afoot for instituting them as a regular fortnightly feature, Monday evenings being set aside for this purpose.

This could not be done without the aid of a large library of records from

which we could select our programmes. The acquisition of such a library would have presented insurmountable difficulties but for the timely and generous offer of Major P. T. L. Browne and Lt. A. Mavrogordato to allow us unrestricted access to their grand collection of some 450 records. It was also decided to invest in an electric record player, the cost of which would be repaid out of the small charge made for admission.

Commencing on Monday May 12th the feature has gone from strength to strength, and listeners have been privileged to hear works by Wagner, Tschaikevsky, Haydn, Bach, Dvorak and others. No further comment on the popularity of these musical evenings is needed than the latest decision to make them a weekly feature, instead of fortnightly, programmes alternating between classical and operatic, and musical comedy, operetta, songs etc.

D. W.
T. R.

DEBATING SOCIETY.

The Debating Society has had a somewhat chequered career, attendances being very varying. Some excellent debates have been held, though most people seem to prefer listening to taking an active part and it is often difficult to secure opening speakers.

The following motions have been debated:

"...That the War will end this year".	Carried.
"...That the Films have failed to make an adequate contribution to human progress."	Carried.
"...That the body is more important than the mind."	Lost.
"...That all is fair in war."	Lost.
"...That the only good German is a dead German."	Lost.
"...That ignorance is bliss."	Lost.
"...That a man should not marry in war-time."	Carried.
"...That factory workers in Britain should be militarised."	Lost.
"...That Russia is a liability as an ally rather than an asset."	Lost.
	L. W.

MALE VOICE CHOIR. Under the direction of Sub-Lt. F. W. Pitt, R.N.V.R., a small choir has been formed, which meets regularly on Wednesday evenings at 8.30 p.m. They hope to make their debut on the air in the English Hour shortly. More singers are still needed. J. C. S.

Wanted — A 'Cellist.

An attempt is being made to form a string quartet, but a 'cellist is lacking. Communications to Sgt. E. C. Plush, c/o. Toc H Services Club.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The G.O.C. Iceland Force has generously offered to present three prizes for the best three sets of six photographs illustrating Icelandic life and scenery.

The following are the rules of the competition:

1. All competitors must be members of H. M. Forces in Iceland.
2. All photographs must have been taken by the competitor himself.
3. Each set of six photographs must be mounted on a sheet of paper, and must bear on the back the name, number and unit of the competitor.
4. Each set must be accompanied by an Entry Form, copies of which can be obtained from the Editor, "Northern Light", Toc H Services Club, Tungata 6, Reykjavik, by personal application or letter.
5. All entries must reach the Editor, at that address, not later than Wednesday 1st October 1941.

Results will be announced in the November number of "Northern Light".



Reykjavik, from tower of Roman Catholic Cathedral.

ICELAND: FROM PAST TO PRESENT

Iceland seems to have been first discovered in the middle of the 9th century by Vikings who had been blown off their course while on their way to the Faroe Islands. The first settlers, under Ingólfur Arnarson, came somewhere about 874 A.D.; these were a band of sturdy men and women who sought freedom from the tyranny of the Norwegian king. They were soon followed by other Norse refugees from Scotland and Ireland.

The fertile ground at the mouth of the fjords was soon covered with farmsteads, and the families who lived in them prospered on the fruits of their own labour. It was then that the customs of a self-sufficient peasant community, which still largely determine the national character-

istics of the Icelandic people, were formed; for example, their conventions of hospitality, their independence, the rather patriarchal attitude of the men to their womenfolk, their love of adventure, which in 1000 A.D. sent Leifr Eiriksson to discover America.

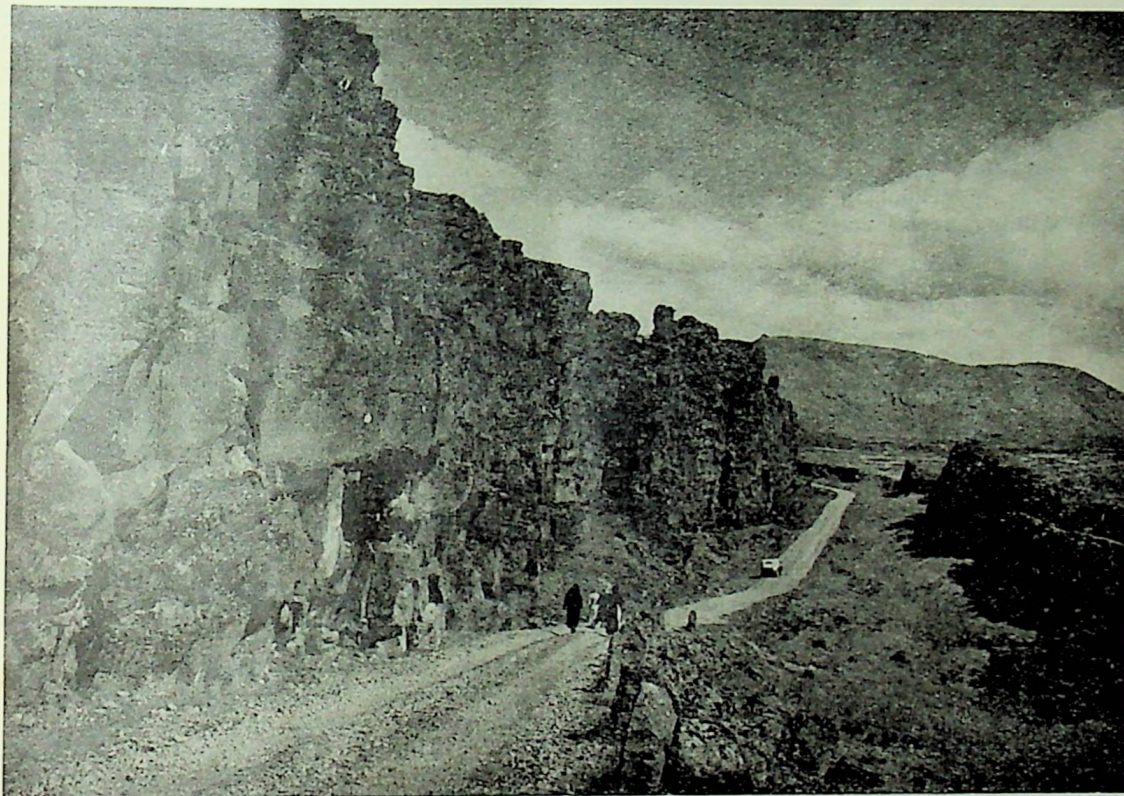
The laws of this peasant community were decreed by a representative institution, the Althing, the first parliament in the world, which was founded at Thingvellir in 930.

Election to the Althing was dependant on the possession of certain pieces of land, called things, and the heads of each family or farmer kings, as they regarded themselves, had the right of representation. Unfortunately, at a certain stage

in the cultivation of land and the development of farm instruments, private ownership of land begins to give the power of exploiting the labour of others, and, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the history of Iceland becomes a bloody scramble for land and dominion over men. The Things fell into the hands of a few

country whose people were exploited in the interests of the ruling groups of the dominant country. In 1602 the increasingly powerful Danish merchant class obtained a monopoly control over the internal trade of the country and in 1619 over all imports and exports.

During the next two centuries the Ice-



Almannagjá — The road through the chasm of Thingvellir.

powerful families, and the Althing ceased to be a democratic body. The dissensions of these feudal nobles weakened the country so that in 1263 the Norwegian king was able to set up an overlordship.

In 1388 control of the island passed to the Danish king, and Iceland gradually became "the Ireland of Denmark", a

landic people were reduced to a state of semi-starvation and all progress came to an end. Their farm produce was expropriated at uneconomic prices, and they were forced to buy the goods that they needed, such as fish and salt, at extortionate prices. Any improvement in their methods of work was immediately squeezed out

of them and any attempt at establishing home industry or developing their own trade and fishery resources was severely discouraged. For two hundred years their social life stood still.

Out of the terrible necessity of their conditions a national independence movement sprang. In the early part of the 19th century it was led by Jón Sigurðsson, and to him goes the credit for the abolition of the Danish trade monopoly in 1854, and the granting of self-government, subject to the veto of the king's council, in 1874. In 1918 the new constitution made Iceland an independent kingdom, accepting the Danish king as king of Iceland. In June of this year the Althing unanimously declared Iceland a republic.

Since political and economic freedom was won from Denmark, the Icelanders have made remarkable progress, in developing their fishing grounds, in transporting goods all over the world, and in building houses, schools, and hospitals. This is shown by the rapid increase in the size of Reykjavik from a "village of mis-

erable hovels" with 600 inhabitants in 1880 to a town of 6,000 inhabitants in 1906, of 20,000 inhabitants in 1918, and of 40,000 inhabitants to-day. In 1900 70% of the people worked on the land, now only 40%.

With these economic changes new classes have come into being, on the one hand a moneyed class, ambitious and eager to exploit their developing opportunities, and on the other hand a working class in the towns, who are very well organised in trade unions and, ever since the national struggle for independence, have been conscious of their political powers. Many of them as seamen have been abroad and brought back political ideas with them. There are no hard and fast conventional class distinctions in Iceland as in other lands, but the struggle between these two new classes, with the farmers holding an unsteady balance of power, is increasingly acute. It is this conflict which determines most of the events of present-day Icelandic politics.

T. C.

GOING HOME ON LEAVE

(We reprint with grateful acknowledgements the following article by an officer of the Iceland Force which we came across recently in the issue of "Time and Tide" for 12th July 1941.)

Somewhere in England I jostled my way down a crowded gangway. On all sides were the happy, beaming faces of soldiers going home on leave. It was raining and misty, but to me it was lovely, the smell of moist earth, wet grass, dripping leaves—it was England and all that I wanted.

I bought a paper and was thrilled to see that it bore the day's date (we are used to them a month old). I stood and listened to a girl talking to the soldiers

—just for the pleasure of hearing an English girl talking again, the first I had heard for a year. "Do all you men really come from Iceland?" she said, "Yes, we do," someone replied. "Well, it is nice of you to come and help us—". I heard no more for the train came steaming in. I scrambled in and just managed to get a corner seat. Soon towns, villages and hamlets went flashing by. Occasionally I saw the results of bombing, but on the whole it seemed to me that the news-

papers had made it out much worse than it really was. When we stopped at stations I noticed how quiet everything was, like a house where someone had just died. Yes, England had changed; her people were grim and in earnest now.

How that journey dragged. I knew how quickly my leave would go; every minute was precious. I was impatient to get to my own island home and see my family, the new additions to the farm and, above all, a brand new son that I had never seen—so new that he can scarcely stand up, even when holding on to the edge of his cot.

It was dark when the train drew up at Kilny Cross, and I got a lift down to the sea wall. The tide was barely covering the causeway. I took off my shoes and rolled up my trousers. Curlews screamed as searchlights swept the sky and on the mudflats I could hear the titterings of various small waders. I splashed through the shallow water and felt the mud oozing in between my toes. A pair of shell ducks passed by; bombers droned overhead on their way to

London; anti-aircraft guns barked, causing all the birds to fly around screeching their disapproval. I thought how strange and how unlike the last war it was to go home to the front line for my leave. Then the dark shape of the island loomed up in front of me and I felt the water growing more and more shallow until at last the splashings ceased altogether and I stepped on to dry land and hobbled to the sea wall over gravel which seemed to my bare feet to be extra full of flints. Socks were pulled over my wet feet and my shoes slipped on with the laces untied—one doesn't waste time over little things like that when one hasn't been home for a year. A black shape bounded out of the darkness nearly knocking me over; it was Jock, my retriever. I knew that there would be muddy paw marks all over my tunic, but that did not matter. Together, as we ran towards the farm, I made out the lines of cows in the fields and I heard the bleating of sheep. Suddenly the garden gate was before us. We jumped it side by side and panted up the path. I was home.

D. H. T.

TOC H SERVICES GROUP, REYKJAVIK

By the time this magazine is in our readers' hands the series of talks and discussions on "Britain after the War" will have come to an end. Since our July number we have had the privilege of hearing Captain E. S. Watkins on "Local Government" and on "Finance", and three speakers — Captain G. W. Smith (Canada), Major Gledhill (Australia), and Captain P. Lawn (New Zealand) — on "Emigration". Padre Craig brought the series to an end with a provocative talk on "Religion after the War" — a fitting end to a course which has set us all thinking hard. During these last months the probation slip system has been introduced,

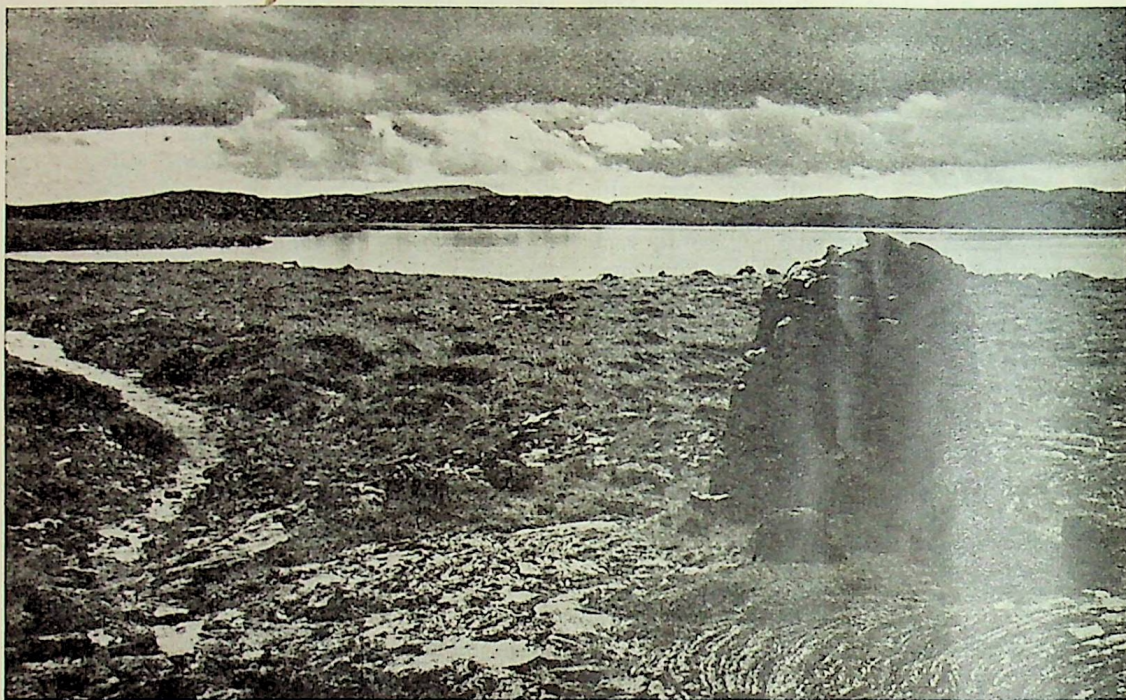
and we have acquired fifteen new probationers.

Starting in October, we hope to arrange a new series of talks about America with the help of our new friends from the U.S. Meanwhile we have a big night to look forward to on September 9th, when the British Minister is to talk to us on "Peace Aims".

At the time of writing, we are busy arranging the third of our large Services Guest Nights, this time for the Royal Air Force, with Group-Captain Primrose as Guest of Honour.

Our first Annual General Meeting is due in September.

E. C. P.



A cairn by a lonely track in a lava field.

ICELAND

O you who are strangers here, and whose hearts are hungry
For remembered beauty and far familiar skies,
Do not harden your hearts to all that is strange, for beauty
Is beauty still though in unfamiliar guise.

Here is a land that waits and yearns for a lover,
Whose proud cold hills are the ramparts of starved desire;
That will open her heart to the heart that is understanding
For beneath her frozen plains is eternal fire.

She is not cold, for her hidden heart is glowing.
Yet she fears to be loved because she loves to be free.
In the pain of her past and the pride that she wears as a mantle
Lingers a loveliness only a lover can see.

But from you who, because her name is not England, scorn her
From you she will turn her head and will hide her pain;
Lonely she stands and in her loneliness lovely,
Meeting disdain with a mirrored and cold disdain.

O open your hearts to her heart, your eyes to her beauty!
She stands aloof, but she waits to be wooed and won;
A sulky child that will leap to the touch of affection,
Her hardness melts as the snow in the friendly sun.

Here is a land of sudden transient beauties,
Shadow and light upon cloud and on stream-scarred hill,
Colours that subtly blend, now pale, now glowing,
Mirrored in rock-walled lakes, for ever still.

Beauty of headlong river that roars and plunges
Down to the frozen plain, and peaks that tower
White in the far horizon, and steaming valleys
Where seething sudden plumes of water flower.

Beauty of stillness and peace in a world of tumult,
Of limitless plains where no strange echoes ring
And no sound lives but the distant murmur of water,
The song of the swan and the swish of the falcon's wing.

Here is the home of stern forgotten virtues
Hammered and forged on an anvil of ice and stone;
Endurance in face of a hostile earth and ocean,
Courage in all her trials to stand alone;

Faith in her destiny, and deep devotion
To ancient dreams new reason must deny;
Pride, once fiery and fierce as fresh-spewed lava,
Cold now as the ice-hard plains that outstare the sky.

Cold because you are cold, O you who are strangers,
She stands aloof, her scarred face pale to the sun.
O open your hearts to her heart, your eyes to her beauty;
She stands aloof, but she waits to be wooed and won.

A. G. C.

THE FAROE ISLES AND THE FAROESE

Over 22 islands 180 miles north of Scotland flies the white-backed, red on blue crossed flag of Faroes, the rocky, mountainous home of more than 26,000 hardy fisher people and farmers. Only 17 of the islands are inhabited, but there is living space enough along the narrow fjords and in the steep-sided valleys where the sheep graze on the plentiful grasslands. The very name "Faroe" means the "Sheep Islands".

Much of the country is like Iceland, and even more fertile, for a fine quality potato crop is obtained every year. There are still a few hot springs working, but they are not so powerful or so warm as their counterparts some 300 miles further north.

The Islands are grouped like a cross-bow, with a large island to the south, on which at Trangisvaag, the chief town, a little coal is mined, although it is of inferior quality. Fishing however, seems to be the most important industry, and in little 70-ton schooners the seamen carry fish to all parts of the North. To Greenland, Iceland, Jan Mayen, Spitzbergen, Norway, anywhere under the midnight sun, — there lie the hunting grounds — and down to Denmark, England, and perhaps to America, are carried the results of their labours in fresh or dried fish.

The capital is Thorshavn, situated on the edge of one of the large central isles of the northern group. Here is the seat of the "Thing" which only meets 3 months in the year and has not the same importance as a parliament, as has its Icelandic counterpart, for the country is still under Danish rule. It is not surprising to note the Scandinavian influence everywhere, in buildings and laws, and even in speech and music, as for centuries either Norway or Denmark have held the islands in varying degrees of leniency and oppression.

The people themselves are Scandinavian in origin, for, like the Icelanders,

they are descendants of the old Norse nobility and their retainers, who set out to find freedom and independence from Harald the Fairhaired, the founder, by force, of a united Norway.

The first serious settlement took place in 825 A.D., but their bid for freedom was doomed to failure. After a few years, the king of Norway saw fit to collect taxes from the Islands, and in order to do so was obliged to conquer the unwilling inhabitants. Since then a few short years of home rule in the midst of hundreds of years, represents the nearest approach to the aim of those first independent spirits.

At the very end of the 12th century the people became Christian, and in 1540 adopted the Lutheran faith. On the whole they are sincerely and deeply religious with the northern characteristic of disliking ostentation or any but the simpler forms of ceremony.



In spite of subjection for such a long time to imperial masters, the Faroese can still be identified as a separate nation. Perhaps it is the remoteness of their homeland which has caused them to stay different. On the great day of celebration, July 29, the anniversary of the death of the 11th century Norwegian king Olav

the Holy, they take many an opportunity for displaying their national characteristic in song, dance, and dress. It is also a day for the most important sport of all — long-distance rowing races!

When a whale is caught it is another day of rejoicing, for whale "meat" is a delectable and important food, and among a few villages one whale means comparative prosperity for some months to come.

The language is from the same parent tongue as Icelandic and when written follows the latter closely enough to make it understandable to Icelanders. Danish

spellings and slightly altered case-endings are the chief difficulties. Speaking, however, is more of a problem. Under the influence of isolation and passing centuries, vowels have become broadened and consonants softened, giving a more barbarian ring than ever to innocent sounds. In the South Island, removed some distance from the rest, another dialect is spoken, the sounds being analogous to English and American. Yet, in spite of all these difficulties, the British troops in the Faroes are now (with the help of the natives) making great progress in the language!

A. S.

I WAS LUCKY

(We are pleased to be able to print the following short, short story contributed by a member of the U.S. Marine Corps.)

It was one of those dreamy, soft, spring evenings when the woodhaze made the air feel friendly and glowing; full of life, soul-satisfying. It brought back memories of a beautiful childhood spent amongst the meadow grasses and in the moss-carpeted forests, of which Austria has so many. As I gazed my thoughts sped back to that same forest scarcely a year ago. Then the ravages of war, of worlds gone mad, were taking their toll. That night of terror Erik, Fritz and Rudolph; fine comrades and courageous soldiers. The angry drone of the monsters overhead; the whine of bombs and then — it was horrible to think of. The green earth was churned to a smouldering funeral pyre upon which were tossed the mangled and partially cremated carcasses of men.

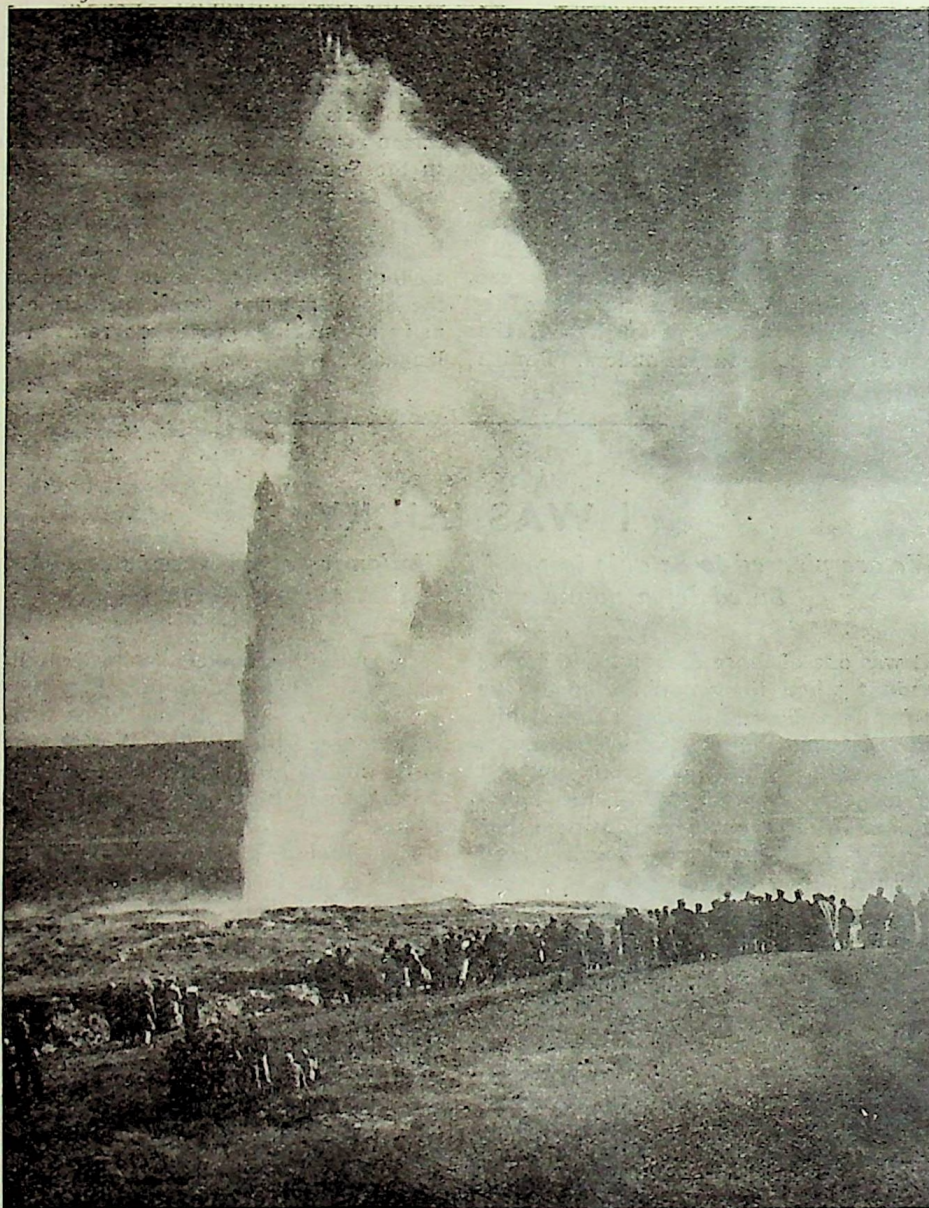
Erik was the first. A fragment rudely ripped his arm from its socket and the concussion threw him screaming into a crater-like grave of blood-drenched sod. To-day he walks and smiles, yes,

even smiles sardonically, with hatred in his breast. He'll never forget. Fritz too saw war as a gaping black hole. A stone pierced his cheek and with its impetus turned his remaining days to total darkness and his nights to vows of vengeance.

Then Rudolf, a mere young sapling, as simple as the furrowed fields from which he came. The brooks and he laughed together, he used to say. Perhaps they still speak the same tongue but I prayed that fate would never let them know him as he is now — an idiot, smitten by the mailed hand of rebuke and false pity, scorned. Once a snigger caused him to stop, leer and run off, gibberishly shouting "I know who the man is that did it; they'll kill him as he tried to kill us they will they must!"

Then these memories faded, and again I saw the beautiful meadows and forests. You see, I was lucky. I was killed,

R. L. J.



The great Geysir in action.

PADRE'S LETTER

The other day I read once again the Parable of the Good Samaritan. I expect you remember the brilliant summary of the Law which the lawyer gave to Our Lord — "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind". It is no mere coincidence that Toc H has also got Four Points in its compass. We serve God with our heart when we strive towards our ideal of Fellowship; we serve Him with mind and strength in Fairmindedness and Service, and our whole soul is working to establish His Kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven.

The four Points are not to be kept in separate compartments. They are parts of our personality. But of the four the most neglected is the mind. How many of us recognise the implications of our duty to serve God with our minds?

The series on "Britain after the War"

has provided an opportunity for this form of service. I trust there will be others like it. But they will fail of their purpose if we treat them merely as discussions. The football player skips with enthusiasm every morning in order that he may be fit enough to take his place in the International on the Saturday. If it were not for the International he would be better employed in helping his mother to clean the windows! In our Toc H discussions we are training to serve our Master with more intelligence and enthusiasm. There is always the danger of mistaking means for ends, and going home after a discussion with a feeling of duty well done. Our duty is only beginning, and, indeed, it has not even begun, if we have not been filled with a determination to learn more, and to use that knowledge to help build a far more truly Christian Britain after the war.

R. N. C.

IN LUMINE TUO

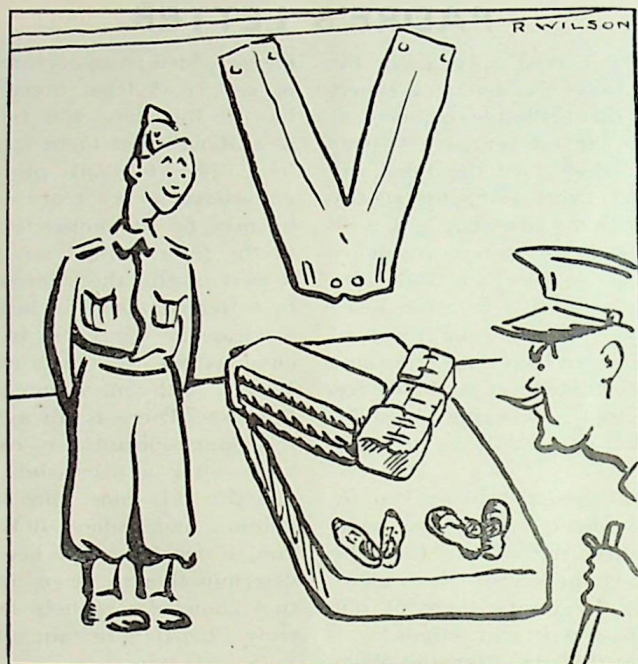
You must have noticed him, well-built and upright, rather short, in his Naval uniform, wearing an eye-shield over one eye. When walking, he leaned slightly on someone's arm. The reason for this was that he had been wounded in enemy action at sea, and, apart from being able to discern between light and darkness, he is blind. One eye is completely gone, and the splinters in the other, being non-magnetic, cannot safely be removed. Yet he went for long walks, he went to church, he went to the cinema, he even went fishing and with the rod put in his hands caught fish. Of course in such matters as these he was much helped by the kindness and thoughtfulness of those around him. But his own incincible courage was the great matter.

He had for squire a bugler of the Royal Marines, aged fifteen. Wounded in the same action, he had lost one of his eyes and had also splinters in his leg. But he was as cheerful as his master.

Some men are made miserable by the presence of a blind man among them. That is understandable. But in many of us the presence of this gallant officer in our midst caused very different feelings, and it gave us a sudden new meaning to the words "In Thy light shall we see light".

For here was one who in no ordinary way was doing that very thing, so that we ourselves caught something of the Light's reflection.

R. C. P.



"V" for
Victory,
sir!

ARMY TERMS EXPLAINED

(being a short glossary of those mysteries of the Service so baffling to the recruit).

Battle Dress. A Battle Dress is a lot of pockets attached to a garment. It is always made one size too large and has special trouser pockets which greatly facilitate the losing of money. If filled with six months' worth of letters from home, the blouse will give the wearer a slightly matronly appearance. The trousers are equipped with special ankle buttons which, when secured and covered with gaiters or puttees, give the wearer the appearance of a singularly unkempt farmer of low morals and vicious habits.

Collecting the sick. This is not so vulgar as it sounds. To "collect the sick" is simply to roam round the huts at a crude and ruthlessly early hour and take the names of those men who hope, from various causes ranging from palsy to house-

maids' knee, to achieve an earthly paradise known as "Excused Duty".

Caps, Field Service, Forage. It should be noted that the forage cap has nothing to do with the forage partaken of by horses, and even less to do with caps, being in fact a curiously-shaped piece of khaki material which is worn an inch above the right eye, but not for very long.

Capes, Gas. These are a species of fashionable raincoat issued in an attractive shade of mal-de-mer green. On certain ceremonial occasions the gas cape is worn on the shoulders in a roll, from which peculiar position it is very easily detached with the assistance of a breakdown lorry, a pair of pliers, a small stomach-pump and the person who so obligingly fastened it on for you.

Despatch Rider. There are two ways of distinguishing these common or garden pests. They invariably (a) have punctures, and (b) go there and back in a hurry. In respect of (b), it is not clear where they go or why, but a Despatch Rider always returns in a vaguely wearied way, as though he had been shot at, machine-gunned, sniped and bombed on the way to and from the place to which it is not clear why he went.

Housewife. The Housewife is a disappointment from beginning to end. It has no capabilities whatsoever in the way of cooking, knitting, making beds, or washing pots and pans. Finally, people who are not in the Army (and who should therefore know) say it is not even pronounced "housewife" but "huzzif". In fact, casting aside the gossamer of domesticity that the name conjures up, it appears that the only virtue possessed by this "housewife" against other types of housewives are purely negative ones. It does not waken one up at three a.m. to put out or take in the cat, nor is it given to buying exclusive headgear at financially inconvenient times.

Route March. A Route March is a con-

centrated way of getting from one place where one doesn't want to be to another place one has no desire to reach. It is usually undertaken in extremely provocative weather conditions which tend to make even the ogling glances of the maidens who come to stare or cheer a matter of only morbid reflection.

"Shun"—"Attenshun". These orders are one and the same. The general purpose is to frighten one into assuming an alert perpendicular position in the shortest possible time. This purpose is not always achieved, however, by reason of the fact that it is usually preceded by a curious instruction known as "Stand at — ease". Now as "Stand at—ease" is a semi-recumbent position in which it is possible to consider the uncertainties of life, the result of last year's St. Leger, the chances for and against leave, and many other Higher Things, the order "Shun" comes as something of a surprise. In these circumstances it is scarcely worth while to move, particularly as the N.C.O. in charge, being presumably of a very changeable temperament, immediately bellows "As you were", which gives you a fresh start.

D. O.

MECHANISED CAVALRY

"My strength is as the strength of ten"

Sang Launcelot,

And added that for good Queen Gwen

He'd chance a lot.

He lived on roasted venison

And shared King Arthur's benison,

All of which made Tennyson

Romance a lot.

The bards who wrote of battlefield

And garrison,

When sword of Christian smote the shield

Of Saracen,

With tales of knights were clamorous

And often would enamour us

Of prancing steeds in glamorous

Caparison.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS

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The next issue of this magazine will appear on November 1st. Contributions, correspondence etc. will be welcomed, and should be addressed to The Editor, Northern Light, Toc H Services Club, Túngata 6, Reykjavik.



Tailpiece.

WHAT IS TOC H?

Toc H is out to win men's friendship and their service for the benefit of others. It stands always, but especially now, when values which seemed permanent are being discarded, for truth and understanding, for unselfishness and fair dealing, for individual freedom based on a practical Christian outlook on life.

Toc H is a Christian society. It is interdenominational, and welcomes to membership anyone who will work with it. Further particulars about the Movement can be obtained at the Toc H Services Club, Túngata 6, Reykjavik, and any one interested is invited to attend any meeting of the Toc H Services Goup, held every Tuesday evening at 8.15 p.m. in the Club. (See page 9.). Its Services Club in Reykjavik (and its Clubs all over the world where British troops are stationed), is open to any member of H.M. or U.S. Forces, and there is no obligation, actual or implied, to join the Toc H Movement.

